

2023 Stahlman Beekeeping E-mail Notes Issue #36a

I am sorry for the delay in sending this note out. Ophelia caused some wind damage here and we lost electricity about the time I was sending my articles out. I am giving my bees a break. They have plenty of winter stores and I checked them just an hour ago and they are flying in abundant numbers. Judi and I will be heading to New York City next Saturday. Broadway beacons us -- flying first class. And that has gotten me to thinking about first class treatment for bees. Judi and I usually fly coach or preferred. First class is more expensive but with so much more than coach or preferred. In July I traveled first class and I can tell you begin treated in that first class section is a hole lot better than preferred. Preferred gives seat with more leg room and is located just behind first class.

As fall sets in -- it arrived yesterday, I am seeing a lot of bees being managed as coach passengers rather than first-class passengers. If you have global entry forget about waiting lines. First class flying means when you sit down in a seat, someone is there asking you what they can do for you and take an order for drinks. You get on and off the plane first. In flight, you have your own rest room and better food. I almost forgot to mention leg room and a seat large enough to relax in or maybe take a nice nap.

So, what does all of this have to do with bees? All I need to do when visiting fellow beekeepers is ask myself [are their bees getting first class treatment?]

I could write an essay on this topic.

A first-class beekeeper doesn't wait until now to carry out essential tasks such as feeding, replacing a failing queen, treating for mites, or carrying out other essential tasks.

Any critical beekeeping task has to be done prior to fall. If one was located in South America for example, bee populations would be growing, splits could be made, queen could be mated, and the beekeeper could be looking for the upcoming honey season. **A northern hemisphere beekeeper must face the reality of bee survival in these modes.**

- **1) A hive needs a good laying queen to produce a good population of bees before fall sets in.**
- **2) A hive must be healthy -- mite treatments and mite counts taken on a regular basis during the bee season.**
- **3) A hive must have food -- living creatures need food to survive and it must be located where the bees can get it.**
- **4) A hive must have a dry interior with good ventilation.**
- **5) A hive must be protected from pest such as mice by reducing its entrance. If anyone of these basic tasks is not addressed, the hive is not getting first class care.**

The single reason **for a hive loss that can be spotted early** is Item # 1. Replacing a bad queen anytime is critical but if the hive population is small at this time of the year not much can be accomplished by requeening. Even if a new queen begins to lay eggs -- the brood nest temperature needs to be kept at 92 degrees F. There will be no great population growth during October, November and December. If the failing queen should survive the winter -- something called hive dwindling is going to happen. The only option with a **weak hive now** is to combine it with a hive that has a good population of bees.

I am including a powerpoint presentation on fall beekeeping that I presented to the 5 County Beekeepers this past week.