
ADOPT-A-HIVE

Quarter 2 - 2022

What a start to the season this year! Your adopted hive is doing superbly now that one of the toughest beekeeping winters is past us. The queen is laying at an **incredibly productive pace** which is a *very* good sign.

When a queen has a high production rate, it means that she is laying eggs far faster than her colony members are dying off (due to the natural attrition rate). The vast majority of worker bees don't live beyond 30 days so the queen has got to be on top of her game.

If the worker bees determine that she is not laying productively enough, **they can actually kill her and try to raise a new queen** that can get the job done. A beekeeping best practice also dictates that underperforming queens are squished and replaced with a new queen. Talk about pressure!

But, as a beekeeper, **how do you know if your queen is laying productively enough?** It's not an exact science and it can take some trial and error to gain a correct understanding. However, as you inspect hives (as you should do regularly), you can gauge how well she's laying in context of the time of the season.

If she's only filled up one side of one frame and it's almost extraction season, she has not been nearly productive enough for the colony to have solid chances at survival. If, however, it's only 1 month into production and she's already filled up an entire frame with brood, this is a great sign of an extraordinarily productive queen. This is *exactly* what your queen has done so far this year!

“The fact is that of the 100 crop species that provide 90 per cent of the world's food, over 70 are pollinated by bees.”

To showcase just how well she's done, **we recorded a quick video** to go along with [today's update letter](#). In this video, we cover what the brood cells look like and how thoroughly the queen has filled in the available cells. As you can see in the video, this is one productive queen!

Over the course of the season, we'll continue to monitor how your adopted queen lays her eggs. If she's productive enough, it *dramatically* increases the likelihood that your adopted colony will survive the tough winters we have in Utah. Fingers crossed!

Did you know? A typical worker bee only has an average life span of about 26 days? The term “busy bee” very accurately describes how hard these bees actually work. In fact, most worker bees continue foraging until their wings are too damaged for them to fly, ultimately leading to their deaths!

- ACHIM STEINER