

ADOPT-A-HIVE

Quarter 3 - 2022

With summer in high swing, your adopted bees are busy foraging and building up their honey stores for wintertime. Their production over the next few weeks will help us determine whether or not we'll proceed with extracting any honey from the beehive. If we make the wrong call, **it can seriously jeopardize your bees' ability to survive** the tougher winter months.

But how do beekeepers know whether or not it's ok to extract? It all has to do with the **amount of honey the bees have built up** over the summer. Without enough honey stores, your adopted colony won't stand a chance in Utah's long, cold winter.

We live by a simple rule for beekeeping in colder climates: namely, that we **do not extract any honey from the bottom two hive bodies** (deeper boxes). Any honey stored in supers (smaller boxes) on top of that, we can extract and add to our honey supplies.

While it can sometimes be a game-time decision on whether or not to extract, we generally have a pretty good idea of whether or not we'll extract

“The only time I ever believed that I knew all there was to know about beekeeping was the first year... Every year since I've known less...and have accepted the humbling truth that bees know more about making honey than I do.”

by mid July to early August. Throughout the season, we inspect your adopted hive every 2-3 weeks and we can see if they are on track to have any extra honey long before extraction time.

A good way to look at this is how much the hive is growing between each inspection. If a hive has a **really** productive queen, the colony's numbers grow rapidly and we'll consistently add more boxes and frames to it. Conversely, if the bees are consistently lethargic or struggle for whatever reason, it's not as likely they'll build up enough stores for us to extract.

In the end, **the most important thing is that we make a good decision** that gives the colony the best chances of success. It's much better for us to forego extraction if it means that it gives the bees a better chance to survive the wintertime.

With the current pace, your adopted hive is ahead of schedule and we anticipate that we'll be able to extract next month!

Did you know? Honey bees have 5 eyes! The front 2 eyes (also known as the “compound eyes”) help the bees understand shapes & colors while the top 3 eyes are used for navigation and orientation. The bees use both sets of eyes concurrently to help them go about their duties.

- SUE HUBBELL