

Autumn Feed Schedule

Princeton, BC · elevation ~700 m · target: HEAVY by 30 September — 3H Standard, Section IV

Winter is decided in August, not in November. The bees that carry the colony to March are raised between mid-August and late September, and they cannot be raised on an empty box. Weigh, then feed to the number.

TARGET WEIGHTS — FULL HIVE, HEFTED OR SCALED

Date	Configuration	Target gross weight	If short
15 Aug	Double deep	45–50 kg (100–110 lb)	Start 2:1 immediately
15 Sep	Double deep	55–60 kg (120–132 lb)	Feed 4 L every 2 days
30 Sep	Double deep — final	60–68 kg (132–150 lb)	Add fondant in Nov
30 Sep	Single deep	38–43 kg (85–95 lb)	Add fondant in Nov
30 Sep	5-frame nuc	18–20 kg (40–45 lb)	Feed until it stops taking

SYRUP RATIOS AND TIMING

Window	Ratio	Purpose	Notes
Late Jul – mid Aug	1:1 (light)	Stimulate winter-bee brood rearing	Only if a dearth has stopped the queen
Mid Aug – late Sep	2:1 (heavy)	Storage — bees must cure and cap it	Bees cannot dehydrate syrup below ~10 °C
Oct	2:1 if still short	Last chance for liquid feed	Stop when night lows sit under 5 °C
Nov – Feb	Fondant / dry sugar	Emergency only, placed over the cluster	Never liquid; it chills and causes dysentery

ORDER OF OPERATIONS

1. Pull supers and finish extraction before feeding. Never feed with honey supers on.
2. Mite treatment first, feeding second — winter bees must be raised mite-free.
3. Reduce entrances before you feed. Feeding starts robbing.
4. Feed inside the hive (top or frame feeder), never open-feed in the yard.
5. Heft or scale every hive weekly through September; write the number down.
6. Final wrap: heavy, tight, dry, top entrance open, mouse guard on, tilted forward.

POLLEN — THE HALF EVERYONE FORGETS

Carbohydrate makes weight; protein makes winter bees. If your late-August pollen is thin (drought year, poor rabbitbrush and aster), feed a pollen supplement patty from mid-August through the first week of September. Stop before October — patties in late autumn invite small hive beetle and unwanted brood rearing.