

Installing a Nuc

Taken from http://www.beeyondwonderful.com/pb/wp_227e6af3/installinganuc.html

“Before your nuc arrives, you need to have the equipment ready. After everything is assembled, set up the hive stand, bottom board, and a hive body in the location you have chosen for your hive. Add an entrance reducer to the hive entrance to help the bees defend a smaller space until they are strong enough to defend a full sized entrance. This helps to reduce robbing while the nuc is building up.

Now you are ready to install the nuc. Take the nuc box and your tools out to the hive. Open the hive and place four frames in the hive, two against one side, and two against the other side, leaving space for six frames in the middle.

Fire up the smoker and puff a little smoke into the nuc box through the vent holes a couple times, then wait a minute or two to let them gorge themselves on honey. This calms them down and makes it easier to work with them.

Now open the nuc box. Use hive tool to remove the outermost frame from either side of the nuc box. Place the frame in the new hive against one of the frames that you’ve already placed in the hive. Repeat this until all the frames are in the hive. Make sure that each frame is place in the hive in the same order and orientation that they were already in. Another good practice is to place each frame an inch or two away from the frame next to it, then slide it into place. This helps avoid crushing bees by rolling them.

After all the frames are in the hive, turn the nuc box upside down and slap it a few times to get the remaining bees in the hive. After you’ve knocked as many bees in as you can, check the nuc box to make sure the queen isn’t hanging onto something inside the nuc box. If she is found in the nuc box, rap on it a few more times to knock her out into the new hive. After you are sure that the queen is not in the nuc box, place the inner cover on the new hive.

You will need to feed your new nuc to help stimulate brood rearing and comb drawing. This can be done using whatever type of feeder you have purchased. During the spring, and mixture of one part sugar to one part water makes a good feed that stimulates the bees to raise more brood and draw new combs.

Place the Outer cover on the hive, and then a weight on the outer cover. Then come back and refill their feeder when it gets low. It is important not to over feed a hive. Over feeding can cause the bees to fill in the entire comb with syrup, and rob the queen of space to lay eggs in.”

Taken from <http://www.indianahoney.com/ihf/feedingnucpackage/feedingnucpackage.html>

“ You just need to feed them enough to help them draw comb, you don't need to fill the comb with syrup unless there are no nectar flows. Better yet if you have drawn comb, give it to them. Do not give

them a second box until the first box is filled with bees. They have to be strong enough to defend it first.

After putting the feed on, check back in a week to see how much feed is remaining. If there is any feed remaining, check it for an abundance of mold. Then refill but reduce the amount given by a quart.

On week two inspect the hive to see how much brood is present. For your nuc, look to see if the brood nest has expanded and if any new comb is being drawn. Check to see if there is lots of nectar or syrup being stored. Some storage is normal, but watch for the brood nest being back filled. The queen should have plenty of space to lay in. If she has already laid in the majority of the drawn comb, and there are undrawn frames, simply move one of the undrawn frames so it is beside the last brood frame. Knowing if they are backfilling the brood nest is a judgment call, watch their progress, but don't disturb them too much.

Another thing to note, if they have not taken much, or any of the feed, you may have a strong nectar flow going on. In this case it is okay to remove the feed, but if they will take it, give it to them unless they are storing too much of it.

As the season progresses, they should gain in strength, and the brood nest should expand. When the hive has eight frames of drawn comb being used, and with plenty of bees to defend those combs, it's time to give them another box.

Once the first box is full, they will expand the brood nest into the second brood chamber. Keep in mind that as the season progresses, more storage of nectar becomes a normal and healthy thing. After all...they do need to store enough food for winter. If the nectar flows are good that year, you may even get a surplus of honey. So have your supers ready to go! But before you put honey supers on, let them fill the second hive body with honey for winter.

When the main flows have ended, you may need to feed again. Lift the hive to see if it's heavy. If you have to grunt to pick it up, you may not have to feed. On your next inspection, see how much drawn comb and honey they have stored. The top box should be full of honey, and the bottom brood chamber should have some honey in the outside frames, with brood on the remaining frames. The hive should be full of bees and just as strong as any other hive."