



**WINTERING HONEYBEES IN IOWA'S
TERROIR**

Katie Flinn



PRACTICAL FARMERS *of Iowa*

WHEN TO START...

- Spring is my ideal time to start thinking of winter prep
- Alleviates some of the uncontrollable aspects
- Provides multiple seasons of forage for storing
- Gives a head start on some of the unpredictable



PURPOSEFUL PLANTING

- Trying to have something in bloom from Feb-Nov
- Studying the phenology of Iowa and your specific location
- Adding to the natural environment and prolonging bloom times during dearth periods



BUILDUP

- We start with double deep set-up and allow them to buildup through spring.
- They have snowdrops, maple trees, orchard trees, berry bushes, redbud to start spring buildup
- By end of May (dependent on spring rainfall and possible nectar flows greatly abrupted) they tend to have double deep full and are moving into honey supers by this time
- This is when the rainfall, temp extremes, adverse actions can come into play
- Midsummer we are also planting succession crop i.e. buckwheat, sunflower, aster, etc. Heavy flow hitters

ADVERSE CONDITIONS

- Spring-Heavy rainfall that dilapidates nectar flows
- Summer-Heavy drought periods (some natives thrive and some flowering can be found at waterways)
- Fall-Early frost
- Winter-Adversity in climate



PRACTICAL LEARNERS
of Iowa





MITE CONTROL

- Mite control is a consistent task for beekeeping
- Keeping them at controllable levels greatly reduces the risk of losing hives during winter (and other issues during season)
- Configuring the best treatment for your backyard/apiary bees
- If you go into winter with heavy mite load they will decimate your winter fat body bees

Practical Farmers of Iowa

WINTER PLANNING

- Wrapping bee hives vs non wrapping
- Location of hives and wind flow
- Quilt boxes controlling moisture
- Emergency winter feeding
- Cold Storage potential
- How to get through the last few months





WINTER
SUCCESS, NOW
WHAT

PRACTICAL FARMER

of Iowa

SPRING HAS SPRUNG
(OR HAS IT)

PRACTICAL FARMERS

of Iowa





PRACTICAL FARMERS *of Iowa*

FALSE SPRING

- When bees are headed out of winter and false spring hits it is quite paramount to have a feed plan
- Fondant, pollen patties, leftover honey stores

TOOLS OF SUCCESS

- Journaling
 - What went well
 - Climate during the seasons
 - Honeybee manner
 - Mite treatment and whether it was good for you/bees
 - Stay in research




PRACTICAL FARMERS
of Iowa

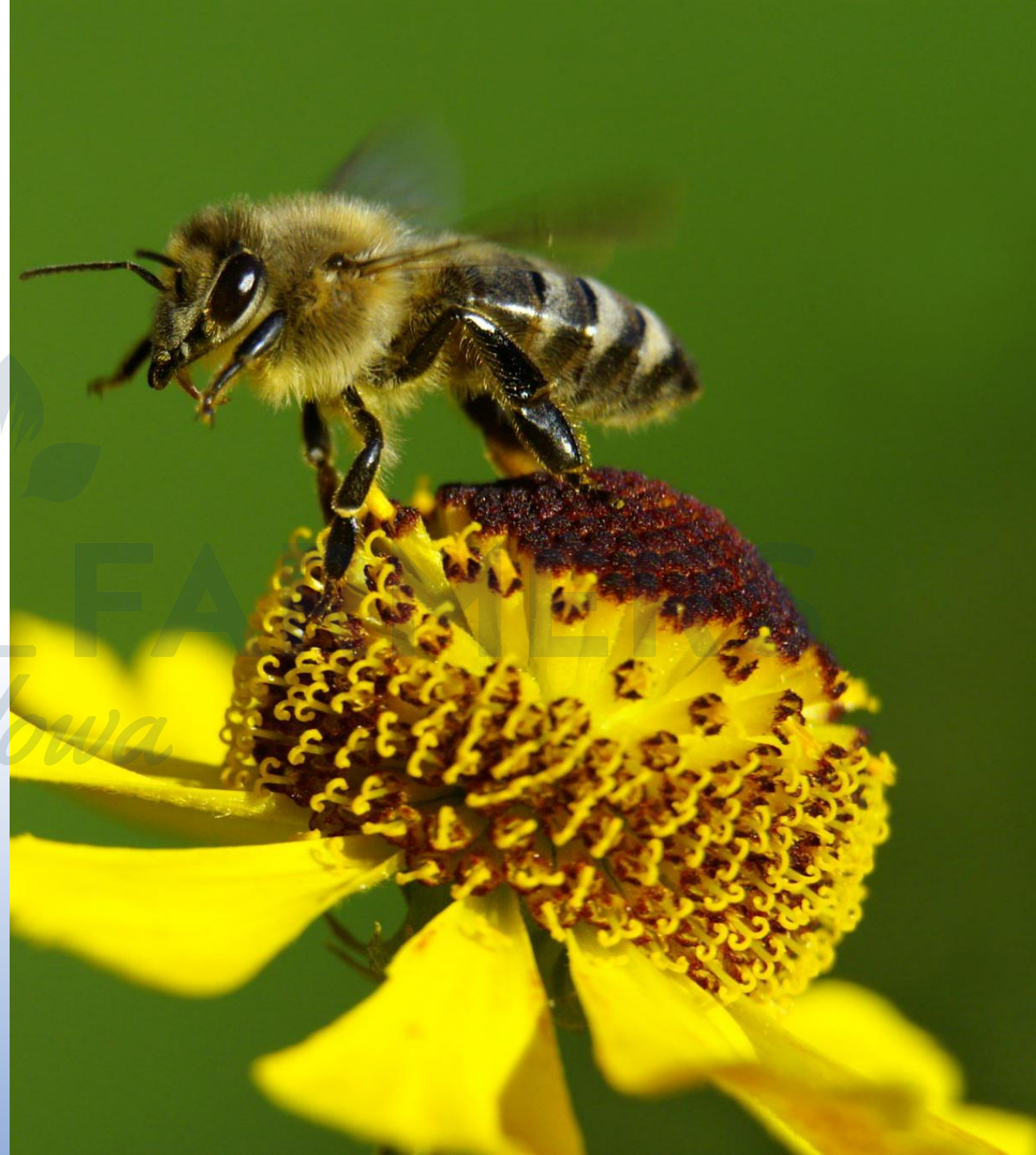
BEE BASICS

What is needed to be a
Beekeeper?



EDUCATION

- Highly recommend taking winter to study the basics
- Join a bee group (there are many across the State and specific to your region)
- Sign up for a basic class (they are put on by Iowa State, Iowa Honey Producers and different bee groups and bee farms)





BEE TOOLS

- Basic hive configuration
- Hive tools
- Proper PPE (suit, gloves, veil, etc)
- Smoker
- Honey extraction tools
- And most importantly Bees



MENTOR

Find a mentor, whether its from a bee group, social media following, youtube videos, etc.