

Why Undertake A Bailey Comb Change?

The key reasons are:

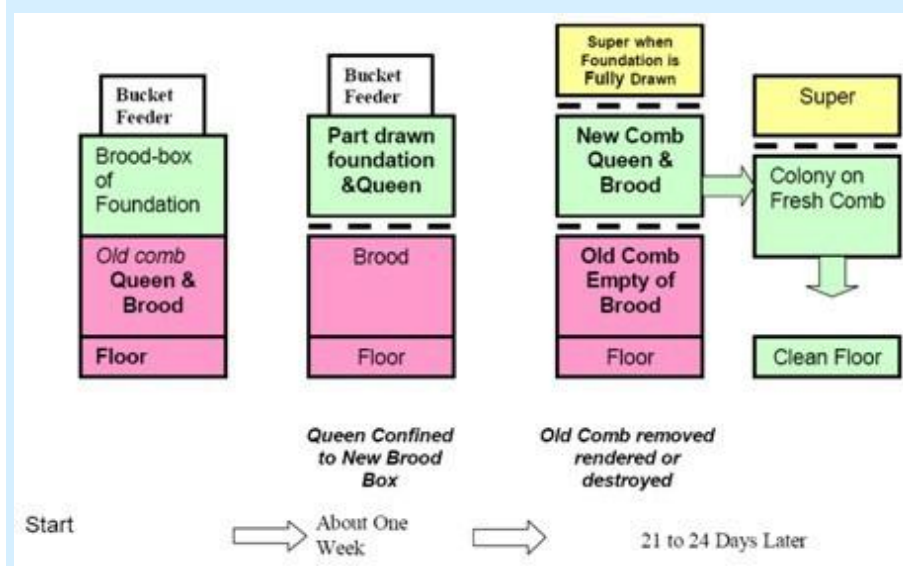
1. Change old brood comb
 - Combs should be changed regularly as they become damaged and mostly because used it may contain the causative organism of many bee diseases, such as Nosema, European and American Foul Brood as well as pesticides
 - The National Bee Unit advise that brood comb should not be used for more than three years and that used comb should not be used in a different colony but rather be rendered or disposed
2. Convert hive from one size to another, eg. National to 14x12

This system replaces all the combs at once and is often best performed in Spring in appropriate weather. April is suitable, but feed the bees to help them build comb. (NB. A shook swarm is an alternative method, can be more suitable in some circumstances.)

Steps

1. Prepare a clean brood box filled with frames of foundation
2. Place this box over current brood box
3. Feed with Thick Sugar Syrup (1/2 litre of water to 1 kilogram of sugar; see link on Feeding), unless there is a strong nectar flow
4. When the bees have drawn out some of the foundation, find the queen and place her on this comb
5. Place queen excluder over the old brood box and under the new, trapping the queen in the upper box
6. If possible, arrange a new hive entrance between the two brood boxes and close off the old, thus helping to reduce the amount of pollen stored in the old lower combs
7. After three weeks remove the old brood chamber
8. The brood will have hatched and the comb can then be rendered to recover the beeswax

Diagram Of Bailey Comb Change



Bailey Comb Change