

Sugar Bricks for Bees

A time- and mess-saving method for feeding bees in winter.

Courtesy Doug Stanley, MOCO Beekeepers, modified from Kamon Reynolds

Makes 8 to 9 sugar bricks. This recipe can be divided in half or doubled

This method of requires very little disruption of the hive to feed

See Notes below==>

8-9 disposable aluminum loaf-size pans

Drinking glass, or anything heavy with a smooth, flat bottom

5 lb or 11 ½ cups sugar

1/2 cup water

1. Put sugar into a bee bucket or a clean 5 gal bucket. Pour water over the top surface
2. Use a 5 gal paint/drywall mixer inserted into a drill, if you have one, or mix by hand. Mix thoroughly until all of the sugar is light and fluffy
3. Scoop the sugar into loaf pans one cup at a time. Distribute the sugar evenly around the bottom of the pan and into corners. Press down hard with the glass and lightly pound the sugar evenly from edge to edge into a smooth, compact 3/4-inch layer. You may need to add more sugar depending on the size of the pans
4. Bake 150° F for 5 hours. The sugar should be very hard. Turn oven off and let the pans cool completely in the oven, about 15 minutes
5. Tip the loaf pans upside down, the sugar bricks will fall out. Pans can be re-used many times

Notes:

If your oven does not set as low as 150°, set oven to 170° for 4.5 hours, or 190° for 4 hours

Larger pans (such as cake pan size) can be used, but loaf pans fit into the oven well. The size of sugar bricks can be customized by dividing the sugar in half or fourths with a metal spatula *before baking*, according to your hive configuration

Sugar bricks can be placed horizontally directly on top of the frames, if there is room, or inside of a top feeder box, or vertically inside of an empty frame feeder

Slide the lid over just enough to place the bricks into the hive