

Preparing a hive for a package with frames from dead out(s)

When a colony dies, clean out the dead bees. Carefully scrape or brush the bees from the frames while trying not to damage the comb. If it is cold be extra careful to not damage the wax comb. Do not try to remove the bees that are inside the cells. You will do more damage to the wax comb than it is worth.

Inspect the frames for any sign of American Foulbrood (AFB). If you see AFB you should dispose of *all* of the frames from that hive. For more information on AFB and how to identify signs of AFB see the *Honey Bee Diseases and Pests* manual (z.umn.edu/beemanual). AFB is uncommon and you will likely (hopefully) never see it. However, checking for the presence of scales is worth the time spent in order to reduce the chance of possible future problems.

Any frames that do not pass the “ick” (*Beekeeping in Northern Climates 2nd Edition* manual pg 53) test should be replaced. It is okay if the frames have a little mold. *Dead sealed brood may contain high levels of virus that could be transferred to the next colony of bees. To be on the safe side, dispose of frames with lots of dead sealed brood.*

As you clean up the frames, make a box with the frames for the new package. You will be starting the package in a single box. Place 1 or 2 frames of honey on each outside edge. The center 7-8 frames should be empty drawn comb. Pick the best frames from your supply. It is even better if the empty drawn comb has an inch or so of honey and some pollen on the borders. See Figure 1, second frame in from the left.

While you are at it, make up the second box that will go on your package once the first box is 75% used. The second box should be similar to the first box. See Figure 1. If you are out of drawn comb to fill this box, then place frames of foundation together in the center with the honey frames on the edges. See Figure 2.

The 3rd box will contain the remaining frames. Again, put any honey to the outside edge. Any frames with foundation should be in the center of the 3rd box. See Figure 3. If the 3rd box is over 75% full of honey, you should add super when you put the 3rd box on. See Figure 4.

Note: You will seldom have the exact frames as the ones shown in the figures. Take what you have and get as close as possible to what is described.

Feed sugar syrup with a gravity feeder on top of the inner cover and provide pollen substitute to the colony for the first 3 weeks after hiving the package even if there is honey and pollen in the frames.

When keeping bees in a 2 deep system, use the boxes as shown in figure one for both of the boxes. Then manage the bees as you normally would.

Figures:

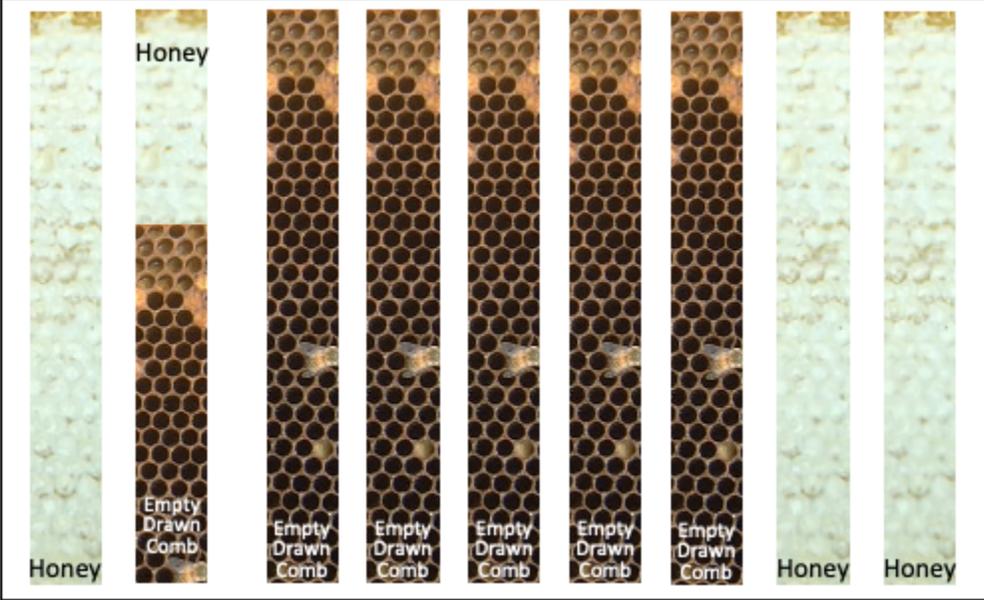


Figure 1: Sample of how the frames should be arranged for the first and second box used for a package.

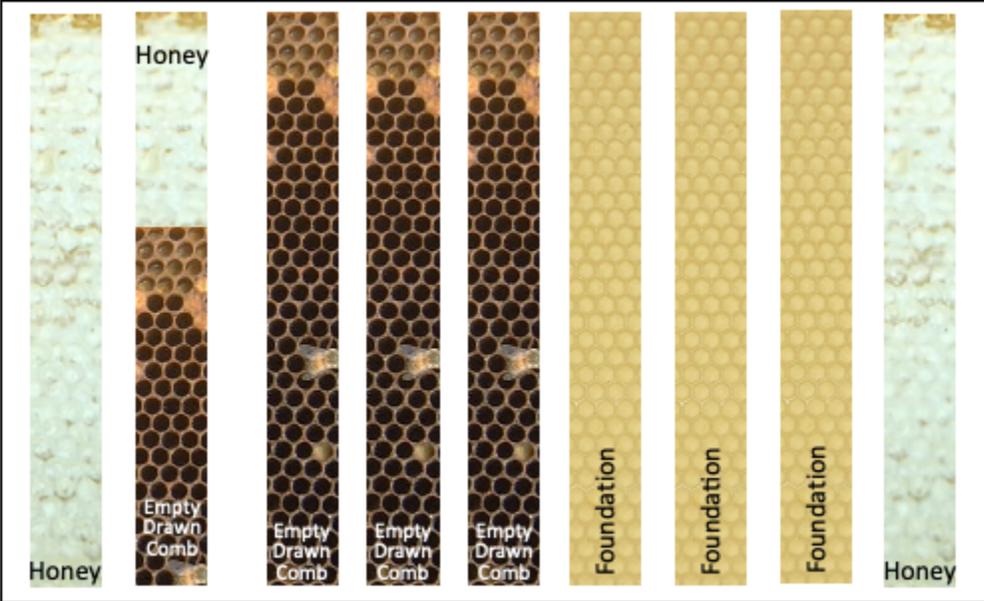


Figure 2: Sample of how the frames should be arranged for the second box used for a package when there are frames of foundation.

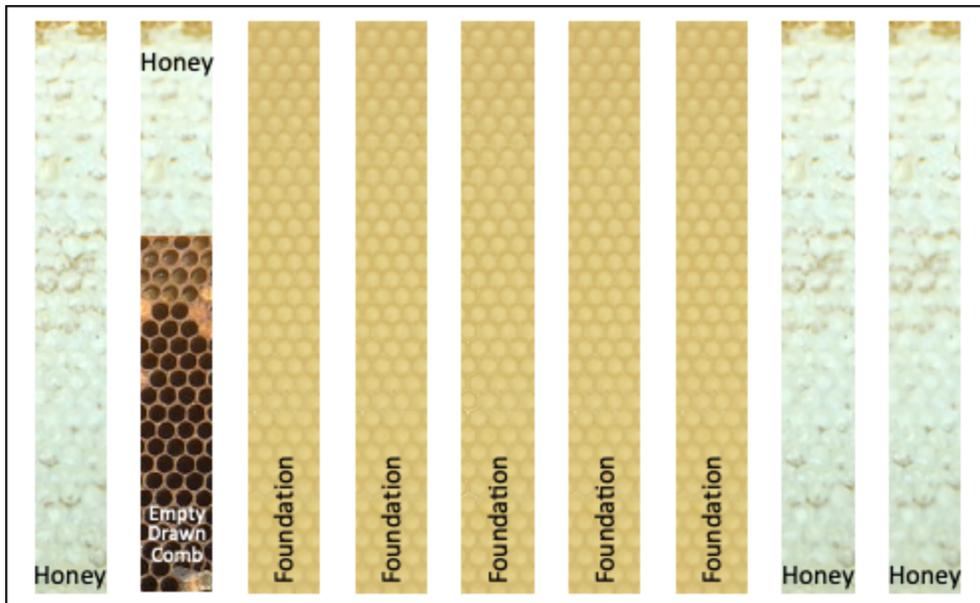


Figure 3: Sample of how the frames should be arranged for the third box used for a package when there are frames of foundation.

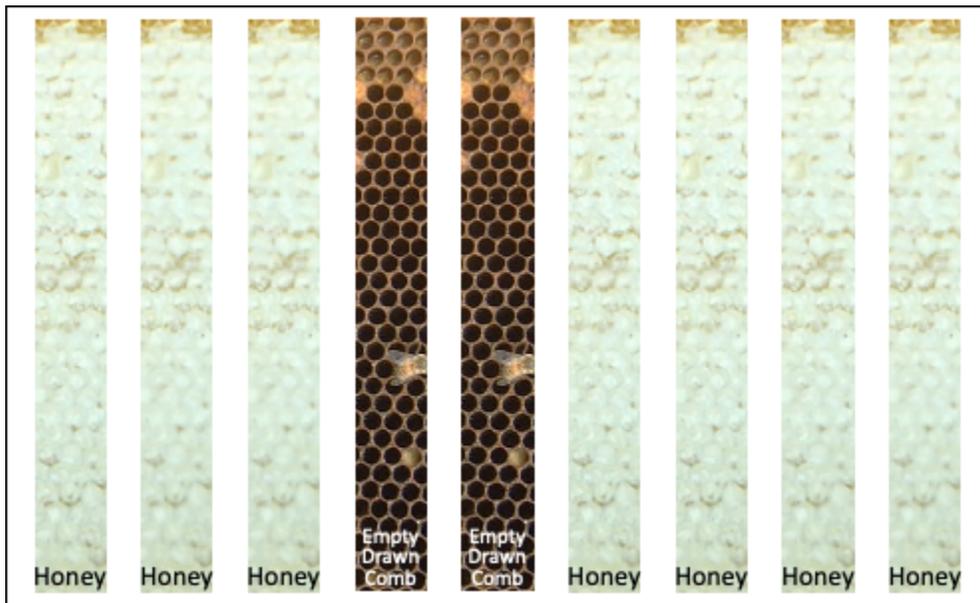


Figure 4: Sample of how the frames should be arranged for the third box used for a package. Since this is mostly full, honey supers should be added.