

The Mountain Camp Method (for emergency feeding)



1. Cut 2 sheets of newspaper so they fit inside the box. (You don't want to leave paper outside the box as it wicks in moisture.) The newspaper lays right on the top bars. It is a pain to work the hive once you've put this on, thus, you want to do it when you likely won't have to get back in again this season. That may / not be your hive until mid-October, depending upon mite treatments, queen status, etc.

2. Cut a hole in the middle of the newspaper so if the bees get there by eating their way up through the middle of everything, they don't have to go around to the likely chilly outer edges to get to the sugar. The bottom pic shows bees feasting on sugar on a warm, February day. It was taken before I started putting the hole in the middle. (And all hives survived that year.)

3. Spritz the newspaper with water or sugar solution.



4. Dump on 2-3 pounds of white sugar, spritzing so it clumps. Yes, this is more moisture in the hive, but you're hopefully doing this on a sufficiently warm day such that they can dry it out and any bees caught in the spritz won't be chilled. The clumping allegedly makes it harder for them to carry it out, which some bees are prone to do, thinking it is a foreign substance in their hive. (Which it

is, but a rather tasty one come February.)

5. Because the sugar is piled up an inch or two, you can't really put anything directly atop it, so you'll need some sort of extender. We have a bunch of two-inch ventilation boxes that we

use for that, with the screened in portions duct-taped over. Sure, that violates the “bee space” rule as they have a two-inch gap above the top bars, but they aren’t in building mode so they don’t tend to fill it in with comb. Unless you leave it on too long in the spring, and then they will. Trust me on that one! 😊